

## Commission gets \$25K grant for Ice Pond

*\$25,000 will go to creating two trails*

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From left, Nathan Page, Ellen Goethel and Jay Diener, members of the Hampton Conservation Commission, stand on the land the town purchased in 2007. The 14.68 acres surround Lamprey's Pond on Woodland Road in Hampton.

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HAMPTON — The town's Conservation Commission was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant. A portion of the funds will be used to construct two nature trails near and around the historic Lamprey Ice Pond off Woodland Road.

"We wanted to dress up the area with trails for passive recreation — walking, snowshoeing, biking," said commission member Jay Diener. "It such a beautiful area and we want people to enjoy it."

A portion of the grant from the New Hampshire Coastal Program will also be used to pay for a preliminary engineering study of the dam located at the pond.

Commission Chairwoman Ellen Goethel said her group received the competitive grant late last year.

It was the second try for the funds, she said.

"The first time around we applied and didn't get it because of a technicality," Goethel said. "They told us what that was and suggested we apply again. This time around we got it."

Goethel said while it's a matching grant, it will not cost the town any more money.

"Our matching share was the actual purchase of the property," said Goethel.

Voters approved purchasing the 12 ½ acres of land off Woodland Road, which included the pond, back in 2005 in order to protect the land and wildlife habitats in the area from further development.

The deal between the town and the parcel's owner was finalized in 2007.

Diener said getting the grant was important because it will pay for the engineering study for the dam, which is in need of serious repairs.

It will also make the town-owned area more assessable for those who use it for fishing or ice skating.

The two new trails, which will be handicapped assessable, will lead down to the shore of the pond.

There has already been work done preparing the property for new trails, he said.

This summer students from Seacoast Youth Services in Seabrook volunteered their time to clean up all the Japanese Knotweed that had sprung up around the pond.

Others have since come forward to help in preserving the property, including the Cub Scouts who created the "Leave No Trace" sign to be displayed in the area.

"It amazes me of all the people who stepped up and offered their services to help enhance and preserve this newly acquired property in town," Diener said. "That isn't something that we often see and, to me, it speaks to how much the town appreciates acquisitions such as this and the Hurd Farm, that are pursued on their behalf."

Goethel said they hope to have the trails completed by summer and, at that point, will host a long awaited ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the town's purchase of the Ice Pond.

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